

Draft Minutes

TOWN OF GUILFORD Historic District Commission Minutes – 19th February, 2020

A public hearing and regular meeting of the Historic District Commission was held on Wednesday 19th February, 2020 at 7:00p.m. in the Guilford Community Center with Chairman Randall McCartney presiding.

Present: John Cunningham, Randall McCartney, Ann Street and Alternate Michael Mancini. Teresa Buchanan joined the meeting in progress (7:02p.m.). Absent: Reno Migani and Alternate Michael Sulzbach.

PUBLIC HEARING

The meeting was called to order at 7:00p.m. Acting Clerk Ann Street read the legal call of the meeting. Alternate Mancini was appointed to act in the absence of regular members.

#826 - William C. and Wendy M. Zabel, to build a new one-story detached barn, and landscape yard area and fencing on rear lot, all on property located at 38 South Fair Street, Assessor's Map 32, Lot 55: Russell Campaigne, CK Architects, 131 Boston Street, Guilford, CT 06437, introduced himself and said he was representing William and Wendy Zabel. Mr. Campaigne said his clients had been concerned for a long time about an interior lot behind them in case it was developed. Recently the Zabels were able to purchase the lot from the property owner with a deed restriction on it which prohibited having a dwelling for 50 years. The Zabels now own approximately one acre of land and wished to create a buffer behind them with a barn-like building. Mr. Campaigne said the existing fence line would be continued with arbor vitae. There will be two car spaces within three bays, the building will be 1¼ stories high and classic in style. Siding will be board or a shiplap system that can be painted. Lighting will be gooseneck style. The eave and metal roofing will be in keeping with pieces of the main house. Mr. Campaigne noted that the building would be well set back on the property, approximately 400ft. from the road. An adjacent barn has a roof which was 3ft. higher than this proposal. Mr. Campaigne added that there was a height restriction of 15ft. under the zoning regulations so he would be requesting a variance. He said he hoped the Commission would write a letter of support for this request. Mr. Campaigne also noted that the front of the building was at 15ft. and he did not think the building looked overscaled. He showed a photograph of an adjacent barn of similar size (Exhibit #826[1]), noting that there were numerous buildings on interior lots that had a similar scale. The doors will be the same as the main house. Mr. Campaigne said the driveway would be changed from asphalt to oil and stone to soften it a bit and landscaping will be used as a buffer. He stated that he was well within the regulations regarding lot coverage, etc. Mr. Cunningham asked if the lights would be full cut off fixtures and Mr. Campaigne replied yes. Mr. McCartney asked if the utilities would be underground and Mr. Campaigne replied yes. Ms. Buchanan queried visibility. Mr. Campaigne said the building could be seen down the driveway. He added that there would be caged lights tucked under the overhang which would be cut off by the overhang. There will

also be motion sensing flood lights on the gable to put light out into the yard area. Ms. Street asked for a catalogue cut and Mr. Campaigne submitted a cut sheet (Exhibit #826[2]). He said the lights which were not motion sensing would be on a switch. Windows will be Anderson series 400, roof will be standing seam metal and there will be snow guards and gutters (half round). Mr. Campaigne mentioned that the building may be painted white which Ms. Street felt would make it stand out. Mr. Campaigne replied that it would not be a stark white and the building was set really far back. Ms. Street queried siding. Mr. Campaigne replied boral shiplap with a very subtle grain, painted. No-one spoke for or against the application.

The public hearing was closed at 7:25p.m. and was followed immediately by the regular meeting.

REGULAR MEETING

Public Forum: 1) 96 Fair Street: Meghan Scanlon, Executive Director of the Women & Family Life Center introduced herself and reminded the Commission that a window replacement project had been done on this building last year. W&FL was now considering either painting or re-siding the building and wished to discuss options with the Commission. Her board had talked about siding and what might be acceptable. Ms. Street stated that the Commission had not approved synthetic siding on any building in the historic district, although it had approved hardiboard. She noted that putting siding over the existing siding could seriously alter the look of the building which would be of concern to the Commission. However, Ms. Street said the Commission could help with paint strategies. She pointed out that the problem with the building could be that it had too much paint on it. This could be left to slough off by itself in sections and replaced with a full body stain. Ms. Scanlon asked if the Commission would write a letter about paint options. Ms. Street replied that Commission representatives would be happy to meet with her board. Mr. Cunningham recommended having an expert review the building so paint would not be applied to wood which was rotted and not viable.

Deliberation of Public Hearing Items:

#826 - William C. and Wendy M. Zabel, to build a new one-story detached barn, and landscape yard area and fencing on rear lot, all on property located at 38 South Fair Street, Assessor's Map 32, Lot 55: Mr. Cunningham felt this proposal was acceptable and that it was very far back on the lot. Mr. McCartney asked if the Commission wished to write a letter of support to the Zoning Board of Appeals. Ms. Street replied that the Commission had always supported these requests because if the building was too small it could look out of scale. Mr. Cunningham said he did not like motion sensing lights. Ms. Buchanan felt if lights did not come on it would be awkward walking around in the dark trying to find a switch. However, Mr. Cunningham said all the lights should be full cut off fixtures. Mr. Cunningham then made a motion, seconded by Ms. Buchanan, to approve the application as submitted with the following conditions: 1) All the exterior lighting should be full cut off fixtures. 2) LED lights should be 3,000K. 3) Subcommittee appointed is John Cunningham.

The motion to approve was carried unanimously with Buchanan, Cunningham, Street and Mancini voting in favor.

Approval of Minutes: Mr. Mancini made a motion to accept the Minutes of 15th January, 2020. Ms. Buchanan seconded the motion and it was carried with 4 votes in favor. Ms. Street abstained since she was not present at the January meeting.

Public Forum (continued): 2) Woodruff Property, Old Whitfield Street: Mr. Cunningham circulated information on a proposal for affordable housing on this property, explaining that he was part of the development team. He said the concept had been approved and was now moving to construction documents. There may be 5 units but this has not been finalized. Entrance is from Stone House Lane. The project will include a community garden and pathway to the train station. Mr. Cunningham said the buildings would look similar to those shown in the pictures. He added that he had suggested this group meet informally with the Commission. Mr. Cunningham noted that it was not a great site and there was only a certain tract of land that could be built on. Mr. McCartney queried the septic system and Mr. Cunningham replied that it would not be a problem. Ms. Street said when buildings like these were at grade they usually sat down. She felt these buildings were unattractive with no articulation. The flat roof did not reflect anything in the historic district. Ms. Buchanan liked the site but agreed with Ms. Street that the buildings needed to be a bit more attractive. Ms. Street added that her concerns about the building did not mean she was against the project. Ms. Buchanan thought an informal meeting would be very beneficial.

Chairman's Report: Mr. McCartney reported that he had received a telephone call from Bob Howard, First Congregational Church that he might file an application for driveway lighting in the rear of the church. Also at the Spencer House there were two strips of driveway and the church may request to remove the concrete.

Correspondence: Monthly budget report through 12/31/19; magazine “Connecticut Explored” for spring 2020.

Public Relations: No report.

Discussions: 1) Change Commission Membership Requirements: Mr. McCartney reported that he and Ms. Street were working on several issues – membership requirements, subcommittee duties and solar panel guidelines. Information on changes to the membership requirements was circulated. Mr. McCartney noted that this would require a change to the Town's historic district ordinance. Due to the difficulty of filling vacancies on the Commission the proposal was to change the membership requirement from 3 in-district regular members and 2 in-district alternate members to 2 in-district regular members and 2 in-district alternate members. Ms. Street said she agreed with this change but wondered if the Commission should have the flexibility of saying any 4 members should be in-district members, whether regular or alternate members. Ms. Buchanan agreed. Mr. Cunningham then made a motion to amend the Rules of Procedure Section 2.1 Membership to state “*At all times at*”

least four (4) or more members shall be owners or residents within the Guilford Historic District.”

Ms. Street seconded the motion and it was carried unanimously. **2) Subcommittee Duties:** Mr. McCartney said that while the Rules of Procedure allowed for subcommittees it did not define what a subcommittee was or what it was supposed to do and he circulated information on proposed guidelines. Ms. Street added that the Zoning Enforcement Officer and Building Inspector felt the Commission’s decisions were not as well defined as they could be. Mr. McCartney said he would like to see the minutes included with the subcommittee’s copy of the Certificate of Appropriateness so it was clear what the Commission had agreed to. Ms. Street stated that there needed to be specifics as to what the subcommittee could do since it was sort of functioning as staff rather than commission members. Ms. Buchanan said she would not wish to see this become too restrictive. Mr. Cunningham agreed saying the Commission should not micro-manage small problems. **3) Solar Panels:** Mr. McCartney said he was working on proposed guidelines. **4) Website:** Mr. McCartney felt the Commission’s information on the Town’s web site was very antiquated and that the Certificate of Appropriateness application should be interactive and that this should all be updated. Ms. Street wondered if an intern could be hired to do this work.

Approval of Bills: Ms. Buchanan made a motion to approve the following bill: Katharine Stewart, secretarial services. Ms. Street seconded the motion and it was carried unanimously.

Unfinished Certificates of Appropriateness: It was agreed that the following projects had been completed:-

- #579 Willa Williams, 94 State, expires 6/17/17 – window replacement (MS)
- #794 Pasquale/Patricia Capone, 285 Whitfield, expires 5/15/19 – windows (RWM)
- #817 First Congregational Church, 19 Church, expires 6/17/20 – roof (TB)

Mr. Cunningham made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:42p.m. Ms. Buchanan seconded the motion and it was carried unanimously.

The next meeting of the Historic District Commission will be a virtual meeting held on Wednesday 15th April, 2020 at 7:00p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Katharine Stewart
Recording Secretary